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Photo: Adam Kitter

Cover: Small is beautiful for the owner of this charming home on 8th Street, a place she hopes her grandchildren will remember with fairy tale fondness. Photo: Heather Fritz

HOME Front



Hat from Saskatoon's own
Sova Design Millinery.

Photo of Amanda Soulodre

We appreciate your notes, emails and calls; we like the 'likes' on Facebook and the tweets when you say how much you enjoy our magazine. We hope our Summer issue prompts more of those great love letters!

Wait until you get a look at a lavish home cinema that probably surpasses the most sophisticated theatre experience you've ever had. You'll want it enough to run right out and buy a lottery ticket! Or maybe build a new house to put it in; read up on the planning that goes into several new developments in Saskatoon and Martensville.

Rusty and Georgie Chartier have taught generations of their own family, classes of elementary students, touring groups and others how deeply satisfying—not to mention tasty—growing your own fruits and veggies can be. The Chartiers have done it, literally a few steps from the front door in their iconic neighbourhood greenhouse.

Catch the buzz about urban beekeeping with Melissa Stonehouse of the Saskatoon Bee Club and Dr. Barry Brown, owner and operator of Bar2Bee Honey Ranch. Survey your own back yard for the perfect spot to put up a hive. Need a fence? Check out the old school technology and muscle you'll need to tackle your own rammed earth wall. And we take you to another fabulous back yard on Ewart where Barry and Franki Stuart have created a serene, layered environment with wood, water and stone.

One of our favourite columns is HOMETown Reflections with our intrepid archivist Jeff O'Brien. Jeff always offers up fun and fascinating history lessons. This time, he takes us back 100 years to life in Saskatoon in 1915.

Speaking of ye olden days, come inside a little yellow house on 8th Street, circa 1932. It's been lovingly preserved and transformed by artist Donna Kurtenbach into a charming sanctuary.

Just in time for those summer weekends, we've got some clever tips for people who want to buy and sell the 'old school' garage sale way. Let our HOME foodie show you how to make the perfect homemade bread with Red Fife, a wheat brought back from oblivion by a Saskatchewan farmer. At your summer cookout, impress your guests not only with that historic factoid, but also with your homemade buns.

Ah, summer! So many stories, so many barbecues, so little time! Enjoy this issue of Saskatoon HOME.

AMANDA SOULODRE
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HOME

SASKATOON

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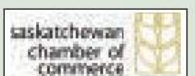
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Thank You To Our Summer Issue Reader Panel



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How the Reader Panel Works

#1

The publisher sends each panel member a number of story ideas.

#2

Each panel member rates the ideas from most interesting to least interesting.

#3

The answers from all six panel members are cross referenced.

#4

The highest rated stories are selected, and our writers and photographers are then assigned to bring those stories to life.

#5

For each issue, a new panel of 6 volunteers is selected.

Interested in being on a future panel? Email: amanda@saskatoon-home.ca with 'Reader Panel' in the subject line.

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THE GARAGE SALE EXPERIENCE

Perhaps one of the most applicable phrases to blue-collar life comes from the classic Canadian Eighties band *Loverboy*: “Everybody’s working for the weekend!” Middle class folks look forward to TGIF (Thank God It’s Friday) and love to kick back and enjoy their hard-earned time off. But in addition to relaxing for a couple of days, the weekend for some also signifies time to go ‘a garage sale-in’.

Depending on Mother Nature’s bipolar temperament, Saskatoon’s garage sale season typically kicks off in May. As soon as the sun comes out, the homemade signs and balloons attached to cars start popping up. This is when the hunt really begins. You see the sign and your interest is piqued but you must now locate the sale. You align the home-drawn arrows that indicate ‘sale this way’ and slowly creep your car towards the potential goldmine.

Seller’s Tip: This is where you unleash your inner *Mad Men*. Make a creative sign. Use colours. Use balloons. Advertising is the key to success.

Once you have located the open overhead garage door with flimsy folding tables on the driveway, you close in. But before you stop, you typically pull the ‘slow down drive-by browse’ recognizance move. Keep one eye on the road and one eye on the sale. Does anything there catch your attention? Do you stop or keep looking for the next one?

Seller’s Tip: Put your most interesting items at the end of the driveway to garner interest. Traffic leads to sales, so draw them in with your best item. Or if your items are not great, use something eye-catching. That life-sized plush Godzilla wearing sunglasses that you had in your college dorm will do.

Of course, the drive-by is only the beginning of the

real hunt. Once you saunter into the driveway and begin browsing, you really become a modern day treasure hunter. There are the obvious buys: your three-year-old needs a new bike and there is one perfect for him for only ten dollars. But the true garage sale master is more interested in the items they did not realize they needed. A painting of a group of cats playing poker may not of been on your wish list, but once you’ve seen it, you cannot leave without it.

Seller’s Tip: Your garbage may be someone else’s Picasso. No matter how ridiculous the item, if you want to get rid of it, add it to your sale. You never know who just has to have it.

This leads you to the next level: the haggle. The only rule of thumb is there are no rules. Lowball offers may be met with fake shock and outrage, but it’s all part of the fun. Yes, you

could probably afford to pay \$2 for the box of 50 *Archie & Veronica Double Digest* comic books, but it’s so much more satisfying when you pay \$1. If you really want a good deal, try making an offer by bundling a few items together.

Seller’s Tip: Be prepared for offers and don’t be offended. If haggling makes you uncomfortable, just respond politely with, “No. Price is firm.” No one will harbour hard feelings.

As the sun sets, so signifies the end of the selling day. Satisfied treasure hunters return to their homes and happy sellers are left with some cash and some more storage space. Whether you are a buyer or a seller, enjoy the experience. The weekend is short, and Garfield the cat and you are on the same page when it comes to Mondays. (P)

Léo Joseph

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In 1995, Donna Kurtenbach never felt her large 9th Street house was a good match. It was too big, too rambling. She hadn't lived there long, but it just didn't seem like home. A newspaper ad caught her eye, but when she learned the

cute little 1932-built cottage was on busy 8th Street, she wasn't so keen. But curiosity won out, and as she stepped through the front door, it was like walking into a charming childhood fairy tale. Never one for big and modern, Donna was

instantly enchanted and made an offer. It's been a 20-year love affair.

"It's unique but it is one of triplets," Donna explains. "One is on Sask. Crescent, the other at the corner of University Drive and Clarence Avenue.

With a few minor differences, they're identical 1 ½ storey, stuccoed cottages" likely constructed by the same builder in the early 1930s. Donna purchased 114 8th Street East from realtor Bob Elmore, who was selling it as part of his



 **KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER**

 **HEATHER FRITZ**

father Murray's estate. Donna had always assumed Murray was the only owner.

"When I came in, all the windows were covered by custom-made heavy yellow draperies," Donna recalls. "The material was wonderful and I

kept them. I reuse, repurpose and make things. But even with windows covered, I could see the potential for a lovely, light and airy home." Donna paid \$83,000 and recent evaluations of homes on the block have reached mid \$300,000. ➤

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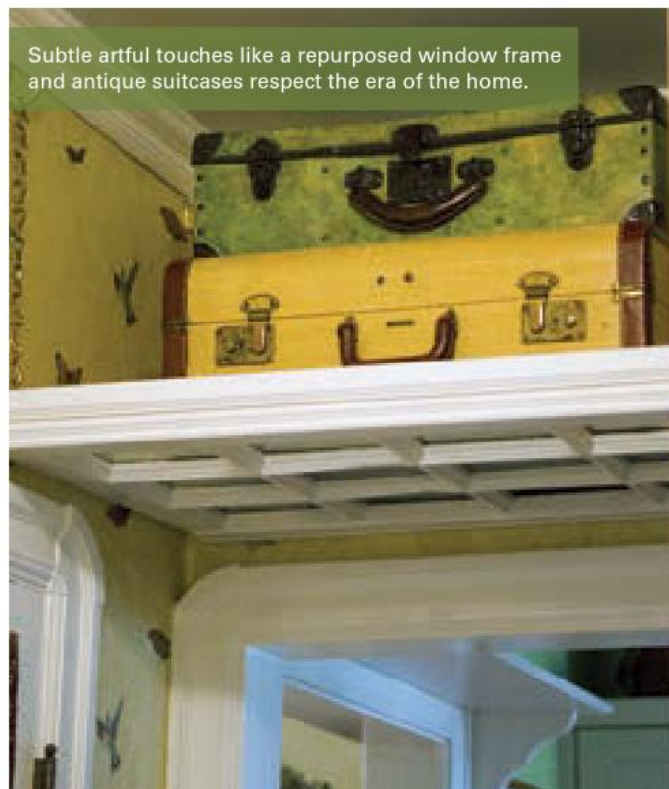
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Living small sets an example for Donna's grandchildren Colton, 8, Cloe, 5, and Maya, 3.



"That seems crazy to me, but I don't plan on selling any time soon anyway!"

She removed the small kitchen's built in dining set and wrapped cupboards around the area to create adequate storage space. But she's always mindful of the era in which the house was built. Growing up on a farm near Cudworth, Donna inherited the thrifty values of her parents. Now both in their 90s, Leo and Helen live only five minutes away. Things were not thrown out until it was absolutely necessary.

Not only handy as a seamstress, Donna can strip and refinish, wallpaper and salvage sorry looking thrift shop and back alley finds if she sees a twinkle of life under a rough exterior. She's done her own textured wall coverings. She

built a screened-in porch. She's rescued beautiful old tin ceiling trim from a demolition and created a frame for a fanciful blue sky kitchen ceiling she painted herself.

"My kids say the house used to be much bigger! All the crown moulding was here, but I've painted myself silly in this house," she says. "I seem to settle on the soothing, warm colours. With our long winters, we long for light and sunshine so I'm always trying to recreate that a little bit in and out. I love ambient lamplight. It can create such a wonderful soft mood, especially with pale coloured shades."

The 1440 square foot house sits on a 50 X 125 foot double lot. Donna has replaced the electrical, the roof and a few of the newer aluminum ➤

Breathing life into found objects is a favourite pastime of the owner.



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When Donna moved in with three children, making the kitchen more functional was necessary, but she maintained the character.



windows. A nod to the builder, she says; all the wooden ones are still solid and work well. In 1995, carpeting covered all the original oak hardwood. The extensive wallpaper was of such good quality that it didn't require stripping; where she

wanted change, Donna painted over it and prefers the slightly textured look over new painted drywall. The fireplace chimney needed a major reno at a cost that put Donna back on her heels, but she felt she had no choice.

"It was financially steep, but what do you do? If you don't care about the era of the house, you just tear things out and replace with new. I'm an old house person and it's like having a kid who needs braces. If you didn't care, you'd just say well, doesn't matter. I didn't want to give up the original fireplace," she says. "During the winter, it's wonderful."

Donna appreciates and admires "nice new things" when she occasionally wanders through home décor stores. But the drive for big, new and modern isn't her style.

Living small is an example to her grandchildren.

"Creating an environment is about who you are. For me, that's very much expressed in my house. I believe you can create a very nice home for yourself without spending very much money," she ➤

One of Donna's most cherished things about the house is the natural light.



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"You have to have a bit of an eye and be brave enough to try things in a different way," says Donna.



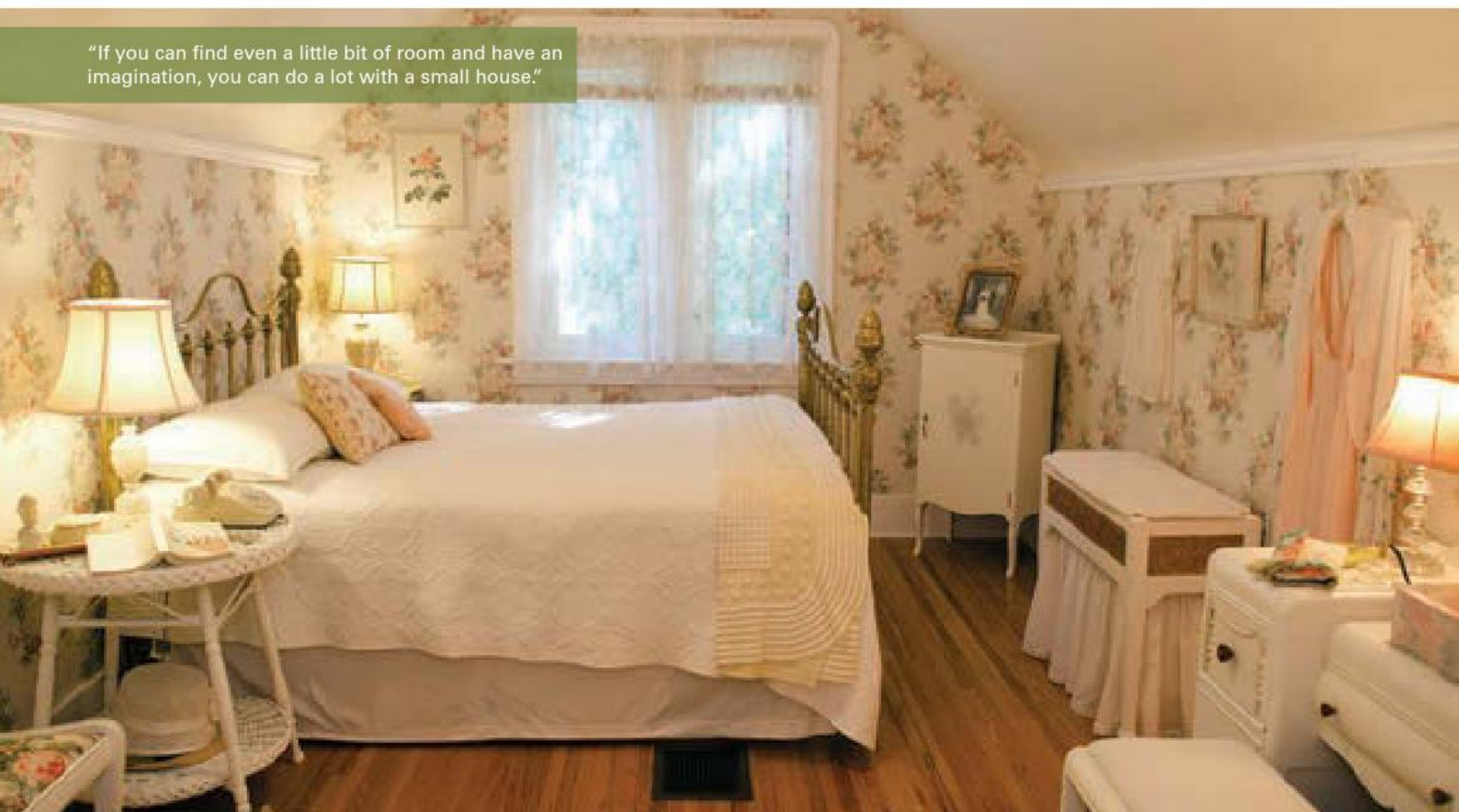
insists. "But you also must have the time and energy and imagination. You've got to want to do this because there's a lot of elbow grease involved.

But when I see something that has potential, I want to fix it up and make it better."

When she thinks about the favourite part of the house, it's

not a space she describes first, but the light. The builder added more windows in this member of the triplets. Donna was a parole officer for 20 years.

When she began to "indulge the creative part of me," in her fifties, she discovered her talent for painting. With an artist's eye, Donna appreciates the




"If you can find even a little bit of room and have an imagination, you can do a lot with a small house."



way the natural light filters in.
 "The room off the dining room where I sew and paint is wonderful as the afternoon wears on. The dining



room faces west so it fills with lovely sun about 3 to 5 o'clock. I think of the house as my artist's palette. It's almost always in competition for ➤



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my time spent actually painting canvases."

She's had dreams of opening up the dining room into the kitchen, but doesn't want to

compromise the original integrity of the layout. The house, she says, is wonderful just the way it is.

"Some people really

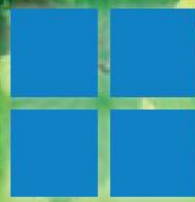
respond to the house because it reminds them of a secure, happy childhood," Donna says. "I hope my grandchildren, when they think of this

house, will always remember it very fondly." 

Karin Melberg Schwier

A refurbishing job on the original fireplace cost a pretty penny, but well worth it for cold winter days.





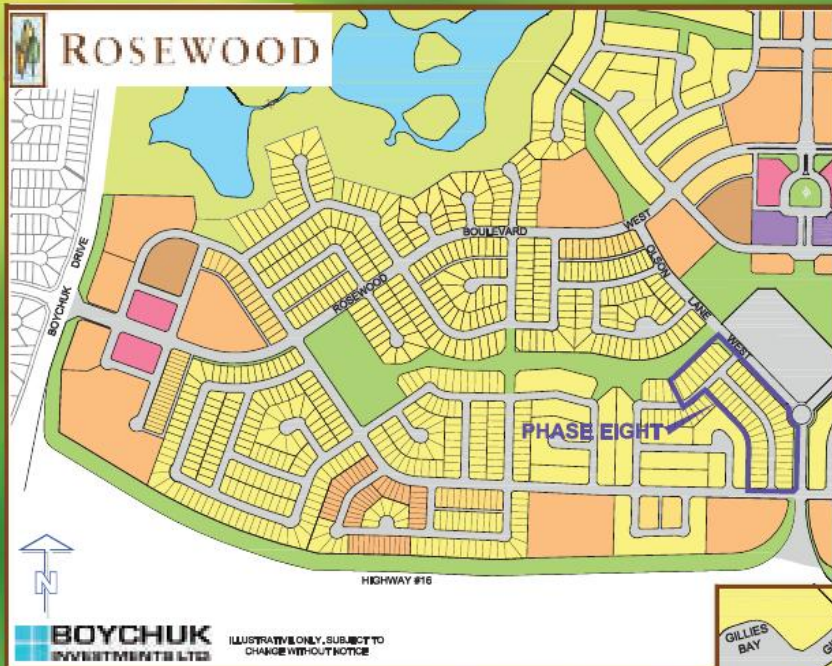
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texture design expert blend creative talents and know-how, the mélange is astounding.

Sean Sullivan, Tom Redhead and Collin Stach of SuRe InnoVations, a technology integrator specializing in Home Cinema and Home Automation, came together

with Rhonda and Ricky Iula, and Dustin Grenier of Decora Homes, and responded to the request of a client who wanted an above and beyond home theatre in their new build. Not just a couple of comfy chairs, some good speakers and a big screen; we're ➤

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talking lavish cinematic experience. Sean had worked with Jeffrey Smith of First Impressions Theme Theatre, Inc. in Florida, on other projects including HGTV's *Million Dollar Rooms*. Jeff, says Sean, makes the magic happen. A phone call was the beginning of a beautiful friendship that, over the course of 12 months, realized the home owner's dream of a luxurious private digital cinema.

Always Room for Finer Things

"It's like having a fine car," explains Sean. "Once you've driven a Mercedes or a Lexus, you notice how ordinary your old car is. This kind of cinematic experience almost ruins regular TV or even going out to a movie theatre for you. But there's always room for finer tastes in everything," he adds, "be it wine, houses, food, travel. You can always raise the bar."

Raising the bar is what Jeff at First Impressions does on a global scale. Grounded in architecture studies and steeped in set design work with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios, Jeff joined the National Theatre Company, a firm that designs, builds and sets up theatres and screening rooms. In 1975, he founded First Impressions, racking up prestigious awards. With 16-foot CinemaScope video screens, professional 3D imaging, proprietary seating design, and museum quality millwork, some of Jeff's home cinema projects approach price tags of the seven figure variety.

Whitney Nordstrom, BAID, Interior Design Consultant with Decora Homes, says it's not every house that can comfortably absorb the opulence of such a high-end home cinema. While Whitney did not design the cinema for this project, the other

Conveniences and details like candy drawers with back-lighting add to the experience.



interiors in the 8,390 square foot home are hers. To put this home cinema in context, the house features—among other things—six bedrooms, five full bathrooms, two half baths, a gym and sauna, wine room, a basement Vegas-style bar, a two-person steam shower, a retail-sized master closet, home office, custom ceiling finishes and millwork throughout and custom light bulkhead features with colour-changing capabilities. Even the two mechanical

rooms are fully finished and "ready for showing off so guests can walk through, glass in hand, to admire." It's the kind of house in which a lavish cinema is not a surprise.

Home Theatre vs. Home Cinema

But beyond the technology, what's the difference between a home media room with a couple of comfy chairs and a home cinema experience?

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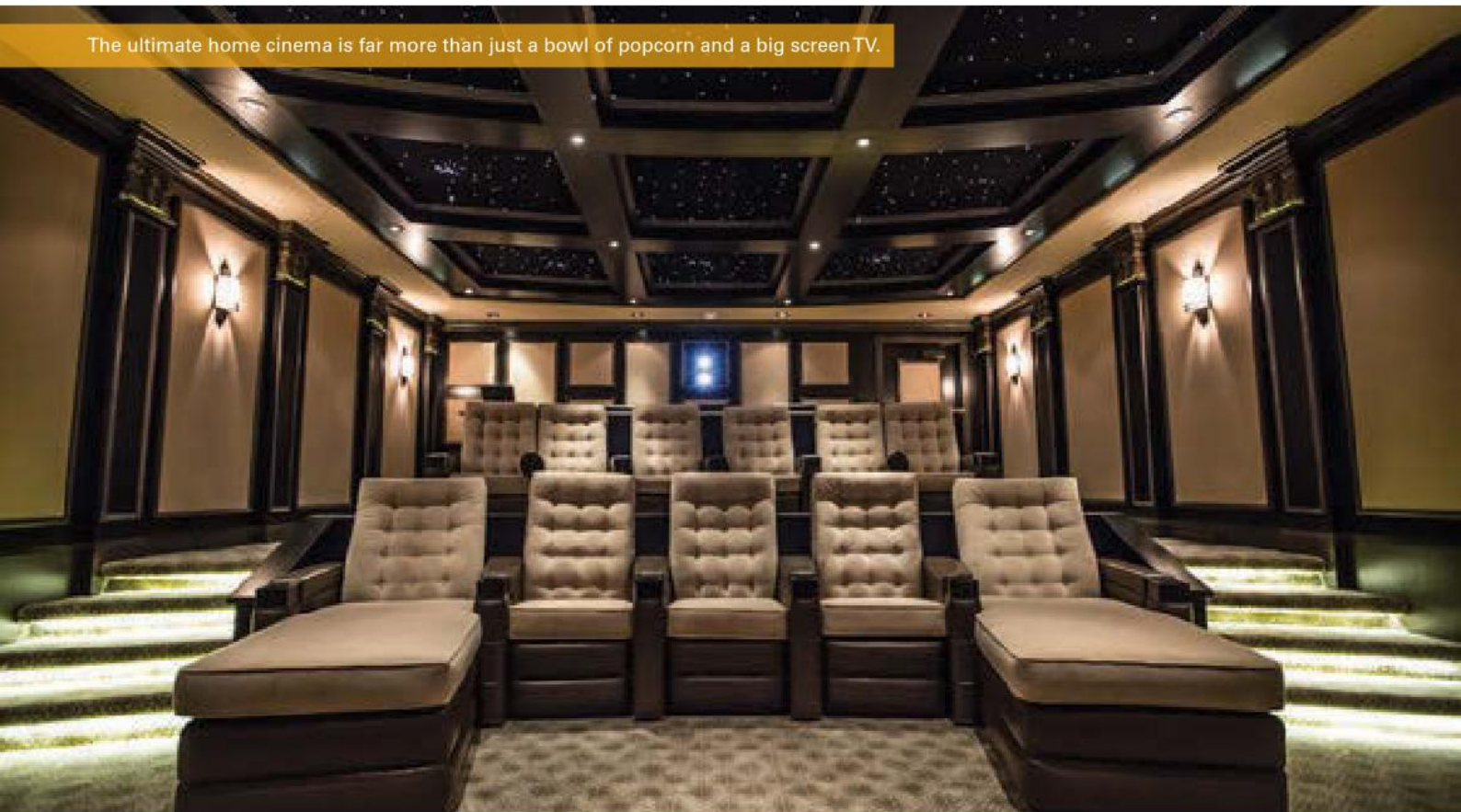


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Not only for movies, the home cinema can be used for gaming, sporting events, even business training seminars.



in the details," says Whitney. "The themed hallway sets the stage even before you go in. The authentic popcorn machine in the vestibule, coffered ceiling with star ceiling panels, beverage warmers and coolers at every seat, the overly plush carpet, lighted bar top, lighted candy drawers with glass fronts and a push-button smooth running automated curtain that reveals the screen," Whitney says. "All of this comes together to transport every guest to another world."

As in any good design, "all of this" must ultimately feel pre-destined and seamless. That takes hard work. Decora Homes and their team put over 1,000 hours designing the structure of the theatre room.

A Cinematic Production Takes Teamwork

Teamwork was the watchword for the project.

"Having an experienced and creative team collaborating on the construction of the bones and guts of the theatre from the beginning ensured we agreed on all the foundation, framing, mechanical and insulation decisions that would be expensive to change if not executed properly at the start," says Whitney. The cinema and the rest of the home must look like it all belongs under the same roof.

To set over-the-top apart from ordinary, a successful home cinema project requires a team that understands the aesthetic and technology innovations that have changed the entertainment industry. To transform those complexities into an easy-to-use home system takes "partnerships with years of experience," agrees Sean. The result is, he says, "truly an experience that will make the hair ➤

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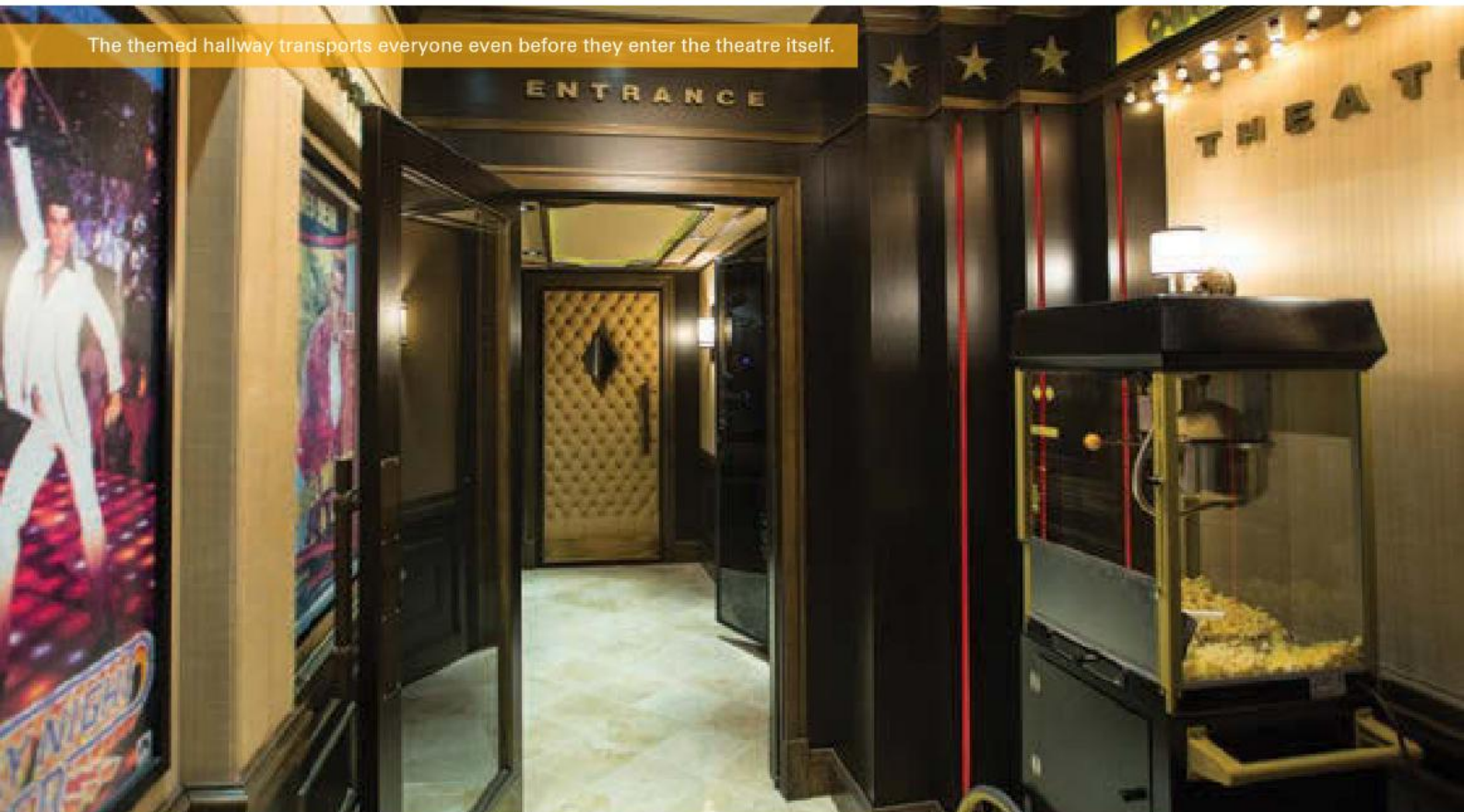




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- **Audience**—How many people do you want to seat? Know what you want to do with the space.
- **Sights and Sounds**—How important are sound and video? Some people want big picture and aren't as worried about sound or vice versa. Size is great, but the right equipment behind it is just as important.

on your arms stand on end every time."

Audience Experience

It's all about the experience. "I love how it all transports me to another world as soon as I enter the hallway," Whitney says. "It literally sets the stage for what you're about to enjoy. I love the star ceiling, the overly plush carpet and the power of the speakers and subs that

bring the movies to life in a way you rarely see."

As with any stellar performance flawlessly executed, the elegance of even the minutest detail makes all the difference. Overhead, just before the movie begins, a shooting star crosses the Milky Way. In your own house. How can you wish for more than infinity? 

Karin Melberg Schwier

BEHIND THE WALLS

Tom Redhead from SuRe InnoVations fills us in with what is in front of and behind the walls of this theatre room:

The surround system pushes 2000 watts of power into 33 drivers, has a 500 band EQ and can sustain rock concert volume without distortion. The speaker system alone weighs over 975 pounds. The movie screen is over 14 feet wide, is curved (specifically for cinematic 3D) and has more surface area than one dozen 55" TV's. Dual 1080P 3D-HD projectors work in tandem to create a true 3D experience far superior than a typical commercial movie theatre. All of this is comes together with over a kilometre of wire.

In order to make everything sound proof Decora Homes added that the ceiling was made of concrete. There was insulated heat ducts to reduce noise. All walls and ceilings had Roxall insulation. Sound bar and two layers of drywall and sound proof glue was added between the drywall. Rubber flooring and sand was layed under the stage. Insulated boxes were added around each pot light. All bulk heads were built out of steel.

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DR. F. BARRY BROWN, ROBERTA WELLS

Five years ago, Melissa Stonehouse started keeping bees in her backyard to help her garden grow. Today, she considers herself more of a beekeeper than a gardener.

"When I first started, it wasn't common in the city,"

says Melissa, who is also the president of the Saskatoon Bee Club. "Now urban beekeeping is kind of exploding."

There are over 100 urban beekeepers in Saskatoon. City bylaws allow for bees to be kept as long as they don't exhibit

defensive behaviour, and aren't a nuisance to neighbours.

One challenge for beekeepers is educating people about the differences between bees and wasps.

"People mistake bees and wasps for each other a lot,"

Melissa says, noting that wasps are the ones that bother you when you're outside eating. "Bees aren't interested in that. They very rarely bother you."

It may be a myth that bees are the insects that disrupt the fun at barbecues, ➤

A small backyard hive is unobtrusive and urban beekeepers may soon notice improved flowers and garden crops.



but it's not a myth that bee stings hurt.

"There's no pain more exquisite than a bee sting," says Dr. F. Barry Brown, owner and operator of Bar2Bee Honey Ranch in Saskatoon. "The sting of a bee is designed to keep you away from taking their honey."

Also, some people are deathly allergic to a bee's sting. Melissa spoke to her neighbours before she started keeping bees, and she says she wouldn't have brought them to the neighbourhood if someone was allergic.

If managed properly, though, neighbours shouldn't notice the bees, and some will likely even start getting better crops and flowers in their gardens.

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SEASIDE CASUAL

"BEE" A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

There are many things you can do as a beekeeper that will help you keep a good relationship with your neighbours. Here are some tips from Saskatoon Bee Club president Melissa Stonehouse, and Dr. Barry Brown, owner and operator of Bar2Bee Honey Ranch.

- Learn about beekeeping. Join the Saskatoon Bee Club, and find a mentor.
- Talk to your neighbours. It's important to know if anyone has an allergy.
- Find an appropriate space. A dry, shaded area protected from the wind, with sun from the east.
- Put the hives up against a high fence; the bees will fly up and over, above everyone's heads.
- Provide water nearby to keep them away from dogs' water dishes or a neighbour's pool.
- Check often to ensure the hives are in good shape and the bees are behaving normally.
- Tend to them on a warm, calm day in the early afternoon, and use smoke to confuse and calm them.
- Find a place away from the bees to extract the honey. They will defend their stash.
- Share the honey your bees create!



Roberta Wells, a skilled beekeeper, has her own backyard hive.



important, as is protecting them from contracting the diseases that contribute to colony collapse.

If you're interested in keeping bees, get educated. Take a course, do some research, join the Saskatoon Bee Club and find a mentor. The Saskatoon Bee Club runs a beginner beekeeping course each May, and you may find a mentor through their monthly meetings. Bar2Bee Honey Ranch also offers an "earn and learn" program, where they pay a wage to work on the ranch while workers are taught beekeeping basics.

Bees require management attention once a week, or once every two weeks during the summer, says Barry, who has been keeping bees for over 40 years. There's some work to be



done when they're hived in the spring, and then they're mostly left alone. When fall comes, you feed and medicate them, then leave them alone completely until the following spring.

The cost of all the equipment you'll need is \$500 to \$1,000. You may be able to make a portion of that money back through selling honey, wax, propolis (bee glue and hive disinfectant) and excess bees. In Saskatoon, beehives usually produce about 250 pounds of honey a year, which sells for about \$2 per pound.

"I usually end up having my 'honey money' that I get something for myself with at the end of the summer," says Melissa. "The other bonus is

when you make mead." Mead is a wine made by fermenting honey and water.

Protecting Pollinators

Beekeeping is similar to gardening in that you generally allow nature to take its course, but uneducated urban beekeepers have the potential to hurt bee populations through poor management.

Since 2004, nearly 60 per cent of all the bees in the world have died, likely due to a combination of factors, including spraying pesticides and widespread infections. Brown says that decline has been stemmed to a certain extent, in part due to the visibility of bees and beekeeping. ➤

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Dr. Brown instructs beginning beekeepers at one of his apiaries during the introductory beekeeping course hands-on field trip.

"We do need the additional pollinators," said Barry. "It's a wonderful hobby to have. However, on the downside, a new beekeeper does not often know the management techniques to keep the bees safe, and not transmit any bad things to other beekeepers, especially commercial beekeepers."

If your bees come down with American foulbrood, you have to burn the hives because the spores that spread the disease need to be destroyed. Other diseases to watch for include varroa mites, tracheal mites

and nosema apis, a parasite. Spreading these diseases is avoidable, so the important task is educating people about it.

"The work that we're doing to train the hobbyists to be good beekeepers is making a tremendous difference, and probably most of them are as safe as any commercial operation," says Barry. 🐝

Ashleigh Mattern

HIGH FLIERS: A FIRST FOR THE SASKATOON AIRPORT

YXE will be the first major airport in Canada to set up an apiary within its borders. This spring, the Bar2Bee Honey Ranch bees were installed in the open fields at the Saskatoon airport by the YXE Apiarist, Dr. Brown. "We put 40 hives in the North Field, North of Runway 27." Airports have a great deal of unused land and in the case of the Saskatoon Airport much of the land required to accommodate the main runway at 8,300 feet and the secondary runway at 6,200 feet is planted to alfalfa. The airport is sited on 2,560 acres of land. The Chicago airport has had bees for a number of years. The YXE apiary is owned and managed by Bar Double Bee operated by Dr. Brown, a longtime beekeeper in the Saskatoon/Langham area. A portion of the honey will be donated to the airport for some of its outreach work with schools.

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When Barry Stuart first saw the 1957-built Ewart Avenue rental house just over 20 years ago, he wasn't terribly impressed. Even though it caught his eye, he spent two more months looking in the area, largely because St. Phillips School was nearby for his

two boys. He finally bought the bungalow, but thought it was a temporary thing. When he married Franki ten years later, it was a hot and frothy time in real estate, so the couple took stock and decided to stay. But there was work needed on the uninspiring backyard.

"The backyard was just ugly," recalls Barry, a partner with ICR Commercial Real Estate. "There was no garage, just a big lilac hedge across the middle. No fence, and concrete off the back door."

But Barry and Franki felt the 50 X 120 lot had the potential

for a beautiful and functional three-dimensional living space. They just needed the right design.

The Plan Evolves

Using the skills of someone "just short of a landscape architecture degree," the ➤

Passive solar heating warms this room so the Stuarts can enjoy it early in the spring and late into the fall.



design emerged. A garage was built, and early on the Stuarts had geothermal pilings put in. With a drilling rig sinking six 120-foot pilings, the yard turned into a muddy mess. Despite the mud, it gave them

a clean slate to work with.

"As you go, things change," says Franki, a retired ICU nurse. "One element leads to the next and then it all starts to talk to you. We always wanted areas to flow from one to the other.

We wanted it to be unique."

The development of a three-season room under an extended roofline took on a ski chalet, Arts and Crafts feel. Rustic Douglas fir beams were selected at a lumber mill in

B.C. To maximize natural light, several skylights were installed. Passive solar heat warms up the room in early spring to late fall. The slate floor is cantilevered out over a concrete slab, an exten-

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sion that serves as outdoor seating. Wide steps open out onto the patio, reminiscent of a waterfall.

Layering with Various Heights

The design included elements at different heights to draw the eye to interesting features. One exceptional piece, a massive 5,500-pound stone set on its end, had to be craned into place. With a hollow core and a pump system, water is drawn up and out, creating a soothing artful waterfall. The large steel base features a collection of smooth

stones gathered from ditches along a new grid road near Clark's Crossing. The couple hired most of the expertise on the project, but they weren't afraid to do some of the "grunt work" themselves.

"I'm in the truck, pointing out the good ones from my nice clean vantage point while he's out in the ditch, up to his eyeballs in muck," Franki laughs. "We love the end result. It's beautifully lit at dusk, and the trickling water is so serene."

The cedar pergola over the seating area and gas ➤



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The Stuarts advise people planning an outdoor space to also layer with elements like lighting, water features and irrigation.



A secure but visually open fence gives the backyard the illusion of more space. A small patch of artificial turf adds texture without the need for care, and works well for homes with pets.

fireplace adds height to the space without blocking any view. Each corner is equipped with lighting and the couple is considering adding a remote controlled sunshade.

Carefree Maintenance

Hanging and potted plants add colour and texture to various spaces. All are irrigated by drip-lines on timers for maintenance-free care.

A small patch of artificial grass lets Nash the Schnauzer feel like she has her own indestructible lawn, but requires no upkeep.

Adding Repurposed Elements

Beyond the salvaged stones, another rustic element was a leftover from the original yard. A scraggly spruce tree was on its way out when the contractor asked if the Stuarts wanted to save the stump.

They did, stripped the bark and installed a weather vane and hooks for hanging flower baskets to create a unique centerpiece in the yard.

Adding to the rustic look, and using the muscle of one son now living in Nelson, B.C., the Stuarts harvested standing deadfall alder stumps. They turned these into low glass-topped tables, custom-made for the sunroom, and solid wood end tables for the outdoor seating area.

Instead of tearing down the boys' treehouse, the Stuarts enclosed the area underneath for storage. The treehouse is now ready to delight the year-old grandchild.

Including Sound, Light

The Stuarts point out that the various layers they've applied to their outdoor living space go beyond the textures ➤

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Barry and Franki Stuart, with Nash, wanted a comfortable and elegant maintenance-free backyard.



and physical features like wood, water, concrete and stone. Other equally important elements include lighting and sound. They installed built-in systems for both to create ambiance for no-fuss entertaining or simple solitude.


"It's not designed to look extravagant," says Barry. "We've never been much for big spaces, so for us this is comfortable and functional. I think my favourite element is the lighting," he adds. "The yard is showcased best at dusk when we have the fireplace going, and the waterfall is on." The lighting is also functional and illuminates rock features, pathways and steps. With a rambunctious grandson, safety is a concern for grandparents who relish lots of visits.

Because careful attention was paid in the early stages, even the relatively small space with its different planes can accommodate a sizable group of guests. They have hosted a gathering of 100 without feeling crowded.

Loving the Layers

"We love our home and what I like best is the layered feel," says Franki. "It's like layers of family and friends. When it's just family, we spend time in the three-season room, when family and friends are here, we open up to the next layer on the patio area. When it's a big bash, we open up all the levels and it all feels open and welcoming."

The couple is still working on a few tweaks, and the front yard is a work in progress. They agree that four years of time and energy put into planning, design and building has been worth it.

"When you've made a decision to stay in a house for the rest of your life," Barry says, "you don't mind taking time and making the investment. You're going to find peace and enjoyment in what you create for decades to come." 

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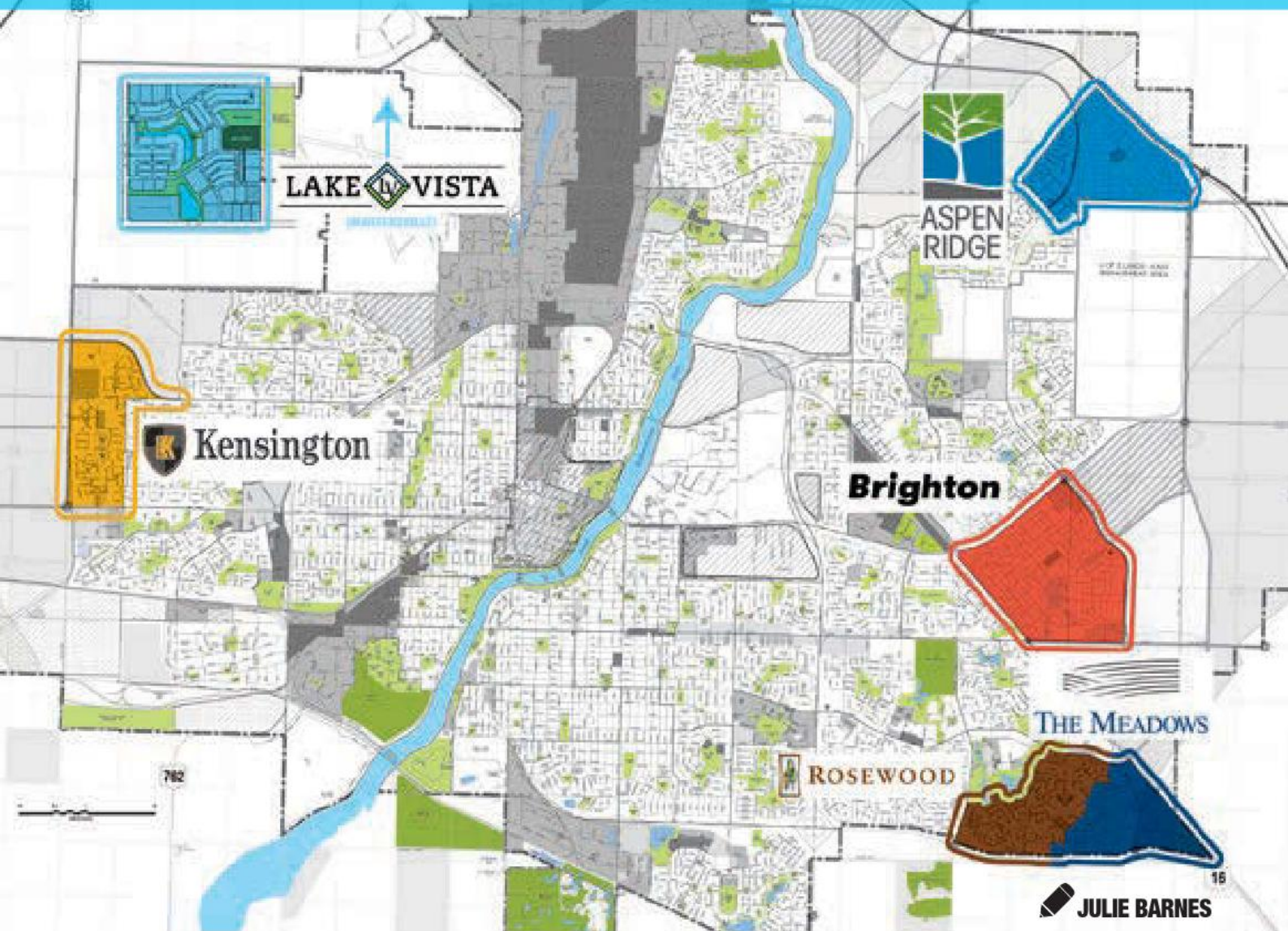
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In his book, *Walking Home: The Life and Lessons of a City Builder*, author Ken Greenberg writes that a city is “a creation that is always ‘becoming’ but never ‘finished.’” With Saska-

toon’s ever-evolving suburban areas, it’s a reflection that certainly applies here at home.

Both the City of Saskatoon and private companies develop our new neighbourhoods—and

that’s unique. In most Canadian cities, neighbourhoods are planned and developed solely by private companies, although there are often city-imposed regulations they must follow.

In Saskatoon, some neighbourhoods are completely developed by a private company. Others, like Aspen Ridge, are City-led developments. In this case, Saskatoon

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Land will allocate 90 per cent of the residential lots to their builder customers (from an approved list of eligible contractors) and the remaining 10 per cent of lots are made available to individuals through lot draws. Other new neighbourhoods, such as Kensington, are created through public-private partnerships.

Design Control Difference

"One of the things we try to do here at the City is to operate on a level playing field with the private developers, so a lot of the things you see in our neighbourhoods you're seeing in private development as well," says Frank Long, director of Saskatoon Land, in regards to public versus private development.

However, one differentiator that is often found is the design controls. "We tend to stay away from prescriptive architectural styles," he says. "That's up to our individual builders, but we do have minimum development controls we apply to all of our lots and we enforce them with our builders." That's why City-led development tends to result in a more eclectic mix of housing styles, while privately

developed areas often have a more consistent architectural style.

New regulations are redefining neighbourhood design. The integration of mixed-use developments, introduction of complete streets and a focus on improving choices for getting around are all breathing new life into the 'burbs. The creation of pedestrian- and bike-friendly neighbourhoods studded with pocket parks and centred around village squares is establishing a sense of place and is building a community feel.

Areas Examined

In this article we've focused on areas in the planning and early development stages to illustrate some of the latest choices when it comes to new neighbourhoods. So while there are areas such as Evergreen that are bustling with new development, they are not included in this article as they are well underway and planning is mostly complete.

We'll start in west Saskatoon, moving clockwise around the city, and then explore Martensville's newest neighbourhood. ➤



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Kensington

Kensington

Public-Private Partnership

Situated in west Saskatoon, Kensington is bordered by 22nd Street on its south side, and lies adjacent to the western borders of Confederation Park and Pacific Heights. An example of a public-private partnership development, the design was led by the City with the input of Dream Development, who is developing 30 per cent of the neighbourhood (an area called South Kensington).

"We wanted to provide housing choices to fulfill market demand," says Frank Long. "It

allows someone to potentially live in the community their whole life. They can raise a family in a single-family home, move into a condo development once the kids are gone and then there are even residential care homes that we have located throughout the community. It's something we do in all of our developments."

Like other new neighbourhoods, walkability is a priority. "We've got some great pedestrian connections that run north-south through the neighbourhood that take people to our central walking space, which is through linear parks and along storm water ponds," says Frank, adding that the paths will also accommodate cyclists. "We have walkable access to the new Shaw Centre and some of the shopping amenities that have

recently been developed in the Blairmore Suburban Area. Dream will also have some shopping that they'll bring in at the entrance to 22nd Street."

Although the transit plan is still under review, the area will likely be served by a couple of existing bus routes that will come through the neighbourhood and offer residents transit service within a ten-minute walk from their home.

Frank says the storm water ponds are a distinct feature. Although many suburban areas feature these ponds, Kensington's won't look like "big bathtubs." Lined with cattails and shrubs, they'll be created to look like natural ponds that would have existed before the area was developed.

The City estimates that, once complete, about 8,000 people will call Kensington home.



Aspen Ridge

City-Led

Located in northeast Saskatoon, Aspen Ridge is defined by the northeast swale to the west, a proposed perimeter highway to the east and Fedoruk Drive and University of Saskatchewan research lands to the south. The adjacent swale sets Aspen Ridge apart, says Frank. "We have this 600 acre piece of land that we're going to preserve in perpetuity. It has a number of rare grasslands and a lot of wildlife, so we want to bring our current environment into harmony with nature."

The design of Aspen Ridge incorporates a connection to the swale. At some point, Frank

says, that pathway will link to the riverbank and future neighbourhoods to the south. "You'd be able to get on your bike, cruise down through the swale, down to the riverbank and all the way downtown."

The City plans to bring much of the neighbourhood's density (achieved through multi-family housing) closer to McOrmond Drive, which slices through the subdivision. Such density makes public transit along the arterial road more viable. If the bus rapid transit (BRT) plan is approved by council as set out in the *Growing Forward* plan, Frank hopes to see it implemented along McOrmond; but even without BRT, the roadway will be served by buses.

"We want to bring that inti-

mate complete street feel to that portion of McOrmond. It will be the first neighbourhood we try it on in a suburban location," says Frank. He explains how, years ago, neighbourhoods were built so that commercial spaces turned their backs to the arterial roads (think of driving into Stonebridge on Clarence). "We're going to turn those development sites around and have them face that arterial road," he says, adding that it will have a Broadway Avenue feel. "That's where we're hoping we'll get some interest in the provision of retail services that will serve this particular area."

The City anticipates Aspen Ridge will have a population of 12,500 at completion. ➤

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Brighton

Brighton

*Private Sector Led—
Dream Development*

Brighton will be the first neighbourhood within the Holmwood suburban development area. Being developed by Dream, the area is bordered by 8th Street to the south, College Drive to the north, College Park East to the west and agricultural lands to the east.

"The vision for Brighton," says Don Armstrong, vice president of land at Dream, "is to integrate existing natural

features into open spaces and develop a walkable neighbourhood that integrates all uses, including residential, commercial, educational, park space, amenities and nature in a cohesive manner."

Dream plans to accommodate a wide range of housing styles to meet the needs of a variety of incomes, ages and lifestyles. Residents will be able to choose between renting an apartment and purchasing a multi-family dwelling, town home, single-family or semi-detached home. Mixed-use developments will combine residential and commercial space all under one roof.

A linear park system will offer pathway linkages throughout the neighbourhood, making walking and cycling a more convenient

method of getting around, while an integrated transportation system will help balance the needs of motorists, transit users, pedestrians and cyclists. Arterial roadways including McOrmond Drive and 8th Street East will follow the complete streets design concept, which will help unite the surrounding neighbourhoods rather than separate them.

"The needs of residents are met closer to home with more opportunities to pursue leisure activities, shop and work, thereby reducing commute times," says Don.

Once finalized, Brighton will be home to over 15,000 residents.



ROSEWOOD

Rosewood

Public-Private Partnership

Located south of Briarwood, Rosewood's boundaries are Boychuk Drive to the west, Highway #16 to the south and Taylor Street to the north. While Boychuk Investments is the lead developer of Rosewood, they've collaborated with the City and a few private companies to create Saskatoon's first green-themed neighbourhood.

Rosewood includes a wetlands area, which is one of the largest preserved green spaces in Saskatoon. Ducks

Unlimited and the Saskatoon Wildlife Foundation provided both expertise and funding towards conserving and maintaining the wetlands project—and they've earned national recognition for their efforts.

"The 65-acre wetlands conservation area is the highlight of the subdivision," says Ron Olson, general manager at Boychuk. "The natural wetlands will be conserved and integrated into the community, connected by a series of linear parks, walking and bicycle paths. You can live in the neighbourhood and not require an automobile to access all the amenities."

As with Saskatoon's other new neighbourhoods, Rosewood incorporates a mix of housing styles for a variety of budgets and lifestyles. A

central village square will act as a gathering place for neighbours. With commercial developments, a community centre, baseball diamonds and potential schools, the square will serve as a lively hub of activity for Rosewood's residents.

Architectural controls are in place throughout all of Boychuk Investments-owned lands in Rosewood. They help to ensure a harmonized streetscape while protecting property values for the homeowners. Controls apply to house style, size, rooflines, exterior finishing and placement of the home on the lot.

Once complete, over 11,000 people will reside in Rosewood.



THE MEADOWS

The Meadows at Rosewood

*Private Sector Led—
Arbutus Properties*

Just east of Rosewood at the end of Taylor Street East, you'll find The Meadows. This development offers a full suite of housing choices including town homes, semi-detached bungalows, laneway homes and single-family homes.

The design approach of The

Meadows is meant to foster a sense of community among neighbours, says Jeff Drexel, president of Arbutus. "Front porches dominate house facades for visiting and landscaping is completed so that people want to be outside and together. The Hyde Park trail access encourages walking and biking and homes are walking distance to amenities and shopping—all features that offer opportunities for neighbours to interact. We are focused on community building rather than a building a collection of isolated residences."

When fully built, the 100-acre Meadows Market will include 1,000,000 sq. ft. of commercial space. It will feature restaurants, a wide variety of shops

and services and a pedestrian-friendly main street. The first major store will open in 2016. The neighbourhood will also host parks, biking and walking trails and two schools.

The team at Arbutus researched enduring architectural and community planning styles across North America and feel they are creating a living environment different from anything else found in Saskatoon. Detailed architectural guidelines were created to provide a harmonious streetscape, and Jeff says this helped them achieve the uniqueness they were aiming for.

Approximately 2,500 families will live in The Meadows at completion. ➤

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Lake Vista, Martensville

Private Sector Led—North Ridge Development

Developed by North Ridge's land division, Lake Vista is situated on the east side of the Martensville, bordered by 10th Avenue North on the west, and by Main Street to the south. It's the city's first master-planned neighbourhood. In the past, most development in the area was done on a piecemeal basis.

"The vision for Lake Vista is a lake community," says Jessica Bonish, marketing manager at North Ridge.


"The streets were named after Saskatchewan lakes and there will be two large man-made ponds, which will offer large amenity spaces around them. Also, it's the first 'complete' neighbourhood in Martensville, meaning people will be able to live and work within the neighbourhood and it will encompass all amenities within it."

Jessica adds that the neighbourhood was designed to maximize walkability and connectivity, citing that there are no cul-de-sacs, allowing neighbours to connect with each other and access various amenities in a more direct manner.

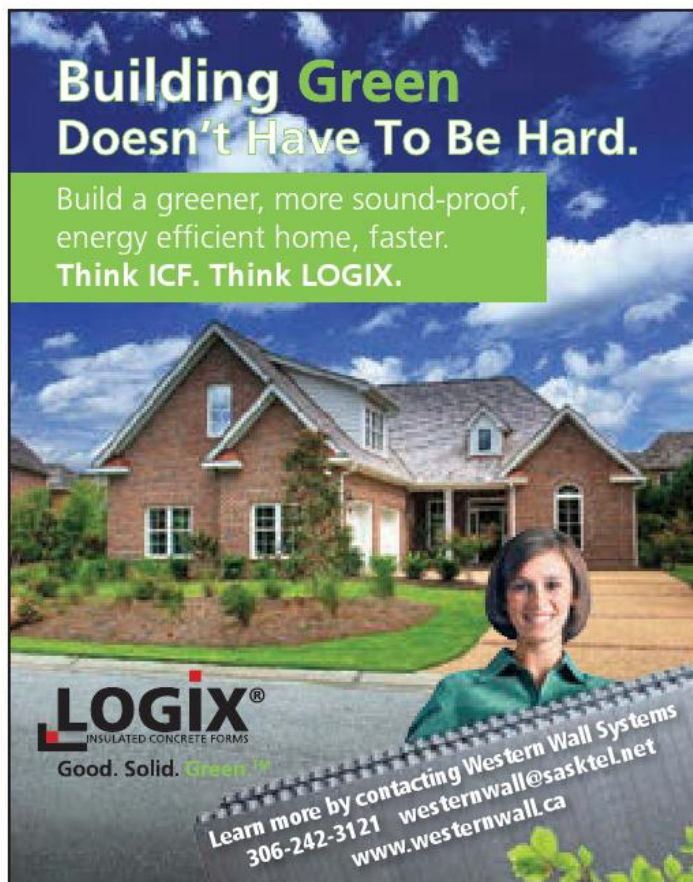
"North Ridge Developments, our home building side, have already built a number of

homes in Lake Vista," says Jessica. "But we also welcome other home building companies as well as individuals who want build a home in the area. Anyone is welcome to purchase a lot." Each phase of development will offer a variety of choices when it comes to housing types, lot sizes and price points.

A new school has already been confirmed for the neighbourhood, with an estimated completion in 2017, allowing the school to open in September of that year.

North Ridge anticipates Lake Vista will create housing for approximately 3,000 people upon completion. 

Julie Barnes



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JULIE BARNES



HEATHER FRITZ

RESIDENTIAL GREENHOUSES 101

Growing a Love for Greenhouse Gardening

On a spacious corner lot in Holiday Park, Georgie and Rusty Chartier grow their own food and maximize every inch of space. With an L-shaped greenhouse wrapped around the southwest corner of their home and a sprawling outdoor garden that stretches to the curb, these two self-taught green thumbs have grown

everything from apples to zinnias since they set down roots here almost 60 years ago. From herbs to fruit to vegetables and flowers, if it grows in Saskatchewan, it has grown in the Chartiers' well-tended greenhouse or outdoor garden.

The greenhouse and surrounding gardens are a

labour of love the Chartiers share with three generations of family. Their seven grown children and 13 grandchildren have all dug in and helped with seeding, watering, weeding and canning. When the greenhouse shelving is factored in, they have 5,000 square feet of plantings.

The Chartiers built their

home in the late 1950s, and that's when their interest in gardening bloomed. "We started growing our own garden because we didn't have a lot of money to begin with and we started growing everything," says Georgie. The original greenhouse was smaller and heated by a potbelly wood stove. That ➤



first structure is long gone, and the current one has evolved over the years. Glass walls were replaced with plastic and new sections were added.

In the early days, they found creative ways to balance full-time jobs (Georgie was an OR nurse and Rusty was a police officer) while raising their children and maintaining their flourishing greenhouse.

"We used to have an intercom so we could put the kids to bed and go and work out there until 11 p.m. I could hear the kids if they were horsing around," says Georgie. They kept busy over the years, not only growing food for their family, but also selling it at the farmers' market and filling special orders.

Laying the Groundwork

The greenhouse framing is mostly metal with plastic

glazing with the exception of the ends, which are comprised of wood framing with glass glazing. It's heated by a gas furnace. The Chartiers considered solar, but at the time costs were prohibitive. Today, the lower cost of solar panels make them a worthwhile consideration. They built their own irrigation system with hoses and underground sprinklers in the garden outside, but Rusty manually waters the plants in the greenhouse. The couple obtained a permit from the City to build the structure, a requirement whenever an accessory building will be 110 square feet or larger.

The Advantages

The main advantage of a greenhouse is a longer growing season. "We can plant earlier. We can do our own seeding because

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Georgie and Rusty Chartier working in their backyard greenhouse.

we have a seeding section where we heat the flats," says Georgie. "You'd start in March or earlier if you were doing seed geraniums." Other than their large pots of herbs, they don't grow anything over the winter. "There usually won't be much left by October; it depends how heavy the frost is. We actually had tomatoes almost until November one year."

Another benefit is that it keeps away deer, pets and any pests that would find the fruits of the Chartiers' labours very enticing.

The Challenges

When asked about issues they've faced with their garden,

Georgie laughs and says that other than the challenge of getting all the tomatoes canned, things have gone quite smoothly. "There was a tomato blight some years back, but the only plants that were affected were the ones out on the boulevard. The greenhouse was OK. We were lucky." A powdery mildew encumbered their cucumbers last year, but for the most part, their plants have been unscathed by disease.

Learning as You Grow

"We bought a bunch of gardening books because Google wasn't around when we started," says Georgie. "It was a lot of book work ➤

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researching, trying to find out what's the best thing to do with soils and that sort of thing." She recommends looking at seed catalogues to see what's available, and reading up on the plants you're interested in growing and the soil mixes they prefer. What they've learned about gardening was often the result of simple trial and error. "We've probably grown everything at one time. Some things work well and some things didn't."

Additional Perks

The expansive garden and greenhouse are the perfect conversation starters that

have allowed the Chartiers to meet many of their neighbours. Kids from the local school have expressed interest in gardening after seeing the greenhouse, and the Chartiers are always thrilled to share their passion with the community. They've opened up their greenhouse for Jane's Walks, the Nature City Festival and other tours.

If creating community and conversation weren't enough, Georgie adds another gardening perk: "It's been a lot of fun. It gives us a place to be outside and work together on a hobby we both love." 🌱

Julie Barnes

THINKING OF INDULGING YOUR GREEN THUMB BEYOND YOUR TYPICAL GARDEN?

Here are some elements to consider when building your own greenhouse.

- **Permits:** If your greenhouse will be 110 square feet or more, you'll need a permit from the City.
- **Location:** Choose a sunny spot with little to no shade. The greenhouse should get at least six hours of direct sunlight a day; otherwise, grow lights can be used to compensate.
- **Orientation:** If possible, orient your greenhouse in an east-west direction lengthwise to maximize the amount of sunlight it receives.
- **Drainage:** Choose a spot with excellent drainage, or build a foundation that will prevent water from pooling inside. Foundations can be made of wood, concrete, stone slabs, sand—or the greenhouse can sit on the natural earth. Gravel floors can provide excellent drainage.
- **Utilities:** Consider what utilities you'll need for heating, cooling, irrigation, lighting, air circulation and ventilation. Confirm if access to these utilities will be possible in your chosen location. You may want to contemplate going green with solar panels.
- **Watering:** Unless you plan to water manually, you'll need to install an irrigation system or use capillary mats that draw water up from below.
- **Materials:** There are a number of greenhouse kits on the market, available in a wide array of styles and materials. Framing options include wood, galvanized steel, aluminum and PVC plastic, while the glazing will consist of glass, plastic sheeting or polycarbonate. There are pros and cons of each, so research your options carefully to find the one that best matches your yard and what you intend to plant.



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CRAIG SILLIPHANT



HEATHER FRITZ

HOME FOOD:

Bread & Buns Baked to Perfection

It probably wasn't the brightest idea to wear a black shirt to my bread-making lesson with Bryn Rawlyk, owner and baker at The Night Oven Bakery. But oddly enough, he is also wearing black, so I don't feel too bad. Bryn was kind enough to have me to his family home to show me how to make homemade whole-wheat sandwich bread, as well as some olive oil brioche buns to share with

HOME readers.

At his bakery Bryn draws from traditions of the past, extracting inspiration from old world European and Nordic practices. These breads are browner, heartier and denser, with a focus on slow fermentation, natural leavening and locally sourced grains.

It's noon when we meet, and Bryn has been up since midnight the night before, baking at his bakery. It's a

labour of love that he came to fruition in an indirect fashion that took years to take hold in his life. It started while he was getting a degree in mathematics from McGill, when he also worked in restaurants and other food related jobs.

"I kept on gravitating by small steps toward baking," he says.

After he finished his degree, he and his wife had their three boys and Bryn became a stay-

at-home dad. Once the kids were older, he had more time on his hands and knowing that math wasn't very employable, he decided to take a leap and start his own business.

"We went on a tour of Italy for the Slow Food Convention, and I think it was there that we had this idea brewing. We were seeing all the bakeries in Europe, small places. We realized that you don't have to be a giant McGavin's ➤

Bread Bakery. You can be a small bakery that's doing good things."

Once they understood that they could take their passion for local and organic foods and build a business around it, the fire was stoked. It took over a year to get the bakery ready for operation; Bryn was doing most of the work himself, from hanging drywall, to building a wood-fired oven and a stone mill for grinding grain into flour.

For many companies, 'stone-ground' is just a marketing term, but not for Bryn. Most

'stone-ground' commercial flour has never touched stone. About 50 years ago in North America, the grain culture changed and small farms of organic grain faded away, as well as the local flourmills that served them. Huge conglomerates started to breed grain for yield and consistency, so a consistent commodity product could be shipped anywhere to bake the same bread in any kitchen or bakery.

"Even whole wheat flour that you buy at the store now is by law allowed to have up to five per cent of the grain

removed," says Bryn. "Which is usually the germ, so then you're losing all the oils and nutrients."

As consumers and eaters, we are just starting to rediscover what our collective palate once knew about our grain heritage. Grain used to be chosen for flavour, grown close to home and ground fresh. That connection to the process is why Bryn gets all his grain from Saskatchewan farmers, including one near St. Denis who is credited with bringing back Red Fife, one of the first wheats named in Canada that had sadly fallen into obscurity and near extinction.

"Mark Loiselle is the farmer who brought back the seed stock of Red Fife grain,"

explains Bryn. "Ten years ago when it had all but disappeared, the story goes that there was just one bag of it split three ways between different people. Mark was the only one who successfully built up the seed stock through farming and growing seed."

Once Bryn has the grain, it's milling time (pun intended). The mill is made up of two huge stones, one of which spins. Grain goes in the middle and the spinning of the stones breaks up the grain, flour coming out the side.

We start by making some whole-wheat sandwich bread. Mixing the flour Bryn milled at his bakery, with water and yeast this creates a poolish, which sits at room tempera-

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OLIVE OIL BRIOCHE BUNS



Poolish	1 3/4 cups Poolish
1 scant cup Whole Grain Flour	1 1/2 tsp Salt
1 scant cup Water	1 tsp Yeast
Yeast - a pinch	3 Eggs
Other Ingredients	1/4 cup Milk
2 2/3 cups White Flour	2 1/2 tbsp Honey
	2/3 cup Olive Oil

First mix the flour, water and a pinch of yeast together in a bowl. Cover with a cloth. Leave at room temperature for about 4 hours.

Next mix everything except the olive oil until it comes together as a dough. Then slowly add the olive oil and continue mixing for around 10 minutes.

Place in a covered bowl and leave for around 2 hours or until it has doubled in size.

Now divide into buns, round them, squash them flat between your hands and place on a parchment lined pan. Let rise for approximately 2 hours.

Spray with water, top with some sesame seeds and bake at 375 for 20 mins. or until golden on top and bottom.



WHOLE WHEAT SANDWICH BREAD



Poolish	3 1/3 cups Whole Grain Flour
3/4 cup Whole Grain Flour	1 1/2 cups Poolish
3/4 cup Water	1 tbsp Salt
Yeast - a pinch	1 tbsp Yeast
Other Ingredients	2 tbsp Honey
3 1/3 cups White Flour	2 1/3 cups Water

First mix the flour, water and a pinch of yeast together in a bowl. Cover with a cloth. Leave at room temperature for about 4 hours.

Next mix everything until it comes together as a dough. Then continue mixing for around 10 minutes.

Place in a covered bowl and leave for around 2 hours or until it has doubled in size.

Now divide into two, shape into a loaf. Makes 2 loaves

Let rise for approximately 2 hours (until it has doubled in size).

Bake at 375 for approximately 40 mins.

ture for about four hours. A poolish is a pre-ferment that helps the yeast and enzymes to increase the shelf life and flavour of the bread. We put everything together to form the dough, which we mix for a few minutes and then place it in a covered bowl for a couple more hours until it has doubled in size.

This recipe makes two loaves so the dough is divided into two pieces. It might take you some practice to shape it into a nice loaf, as evidenced by Bryn's excellent form versus my sad monster blobs. While we're kneading and shaping the dough, I notice bubbles in it. It's a living thing. Using processed ingredients can speed up the process, but they are dead which results in a flatter taste.

"You could technically take ground up cardboard and make it into something," says Bryn. "But this is an active, dynamic thing we're working with."

While the bread is baking for another 40 minutes, we make olive oil brioche buns much

the same way, though with some different ingredients. These buns are perfect for a homemade burger for that most important of Saskatchewan rites—the summer barbecue. And if you divide the buns into even smaller portions, they're perfect for sliders.

Eventually the bread comes out, wonderfully dark and rich. When a slice is cut, you can still see the bubbles, now baked right into the bread. A bite reveals understated, nutty flavours that you just don't taste in store-bought bread. This bread acts as a supporting player to your meal, lifting up your entrée and sides with subtlety. Good bread is not meant to steal the show, just to prop up and compliment the main components. And sure, it might be easier to pick up a processed loaf or buns at the supermarket, but it doesn't taste nearly as good. 🍞

Craig Silliphant

HOMEtown Reflections

 JEFF O'BRIEN

SASKATOON AND THE SUMMER OF 1915



1526 Alexandra Street in 1915 was on the far fringe of Saskatoon.

Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library - PH 98-86

Summer started slowly that year. On June 16, 1915, the mercury hit a chilly -3 Celsius to the great dismay of Saskatoon's gardeners. But by July, the unseasonably cool weather had mostly passed, and August absolutely sizzled. Summer had come again.

But that year Saskatoon was a city in crisis. Two years before, the Great Boom of 1912 had quite suddenly become the Great Bust of 1913. Unemployment skyrocketed. By 1915, 462 Saskatoon families—2,500 people, more than 1 person in 10—were on relief. The value of building permits issued by the city dropped to its lowest level ever. Construction had driven much of Saskatoon's earlier prosperity, and by that summer the only major project still going on was the University Bridge. With the builder close to bankruptcy, things didn't look too good for it, either.

Corner of 28th and Avenue C, Caswell Hill, 1914.



Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library - LH 5254

Glib talk of "over by Christmas" had long since faded, and it was obvious to everyone that we were in for a long, hard war.

But Saskatoon's economic woes were overshadowed by the Great War which had begun amid much patriotic fervour the previous August. Glib talk of "over by Christmas" had ➤

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An early version of the water slide, ca. 1915.



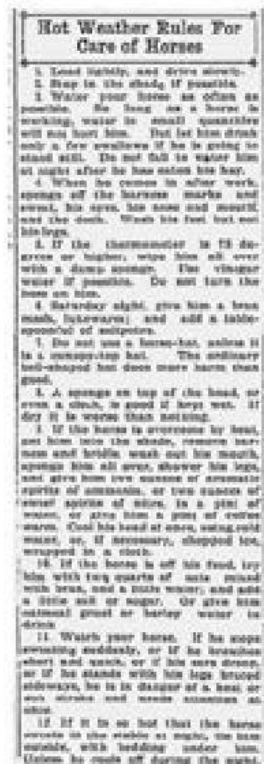
Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – LH 5236a

long since faded, and it was obvious to everyone that we were in for a long, hard war. The newspapers were full of

little else and for Saskatoon, with its strong ties to King and Empire, the war was an all-consuming preoccupation.

In May, news of the sinking of the Lusitania, a passenger liner bound from New York to Liverpool, unleashed a wave of

anti-German sentiment across Canada. Several of the dead were from Saskatoon, and outrage swept the city. Worse, it



Clipping: Saskatoon Phoenix July 17, 1915

Midway at the Saskatoon Exhibition, ca. 1913.



Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library – LH 2687

Trapeze artists at the grandstand, Saskatoon Exhibition ca. 1912.



Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library - LH 5250

was rumoured that workers at the German-owned Hoeschen-Wentzler brewery had held a party to celebrate the news. This turned out not to be true, but that didn't stop Mayor F. E. Harrison from publicly calling for all enemy aliens to be rounded up and sent to work camps. At the same

time, a war of words was being waged from Saskatoon's pulpits and in the letters section of the newspaper between those who preached holy war, and those who called for a more nuanced approach. In 1915, popular opinion seemed to be on the side of the holy warriors. ➤

Saskatoon recruits in uniform, 1915.



Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library - PH 98-81

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But it was not all doom and gloom, not even in those days of war and economic turmoil. For summer had finally come. And the high point of summer is, of course, the Exhibition.

The Ex opened on August 3, "Children's Day," and continued through the week. Although both gate receipts and grandstand admissions were down compared to other years, it was still a cracking good show. At the grandstand, 25 cents let you see acts like the "Flying Men of the Desert," a ten-man acrobatic show ending in a fantastic inverted human pyramid, or the all-female "Tasmanian Acrobats." There were local acts such as Scottish dancers, a military band and a group of dancers from Whitecap in full regalia and comedy acts like the Marconi Twins—a very tall woman and her very short accomplice.

The midway that year

included the usual round of clowns and magicians, as well as shows like "Neptune's Daughter," a swimming and diving exhibition, and the hair-raising exploits of a pair of motorcycle stuntmen riding the vertical walls of the motor-drome.

In 1915, the midway also included a recruiting booth staffed by steely-eyed fellows in khaki who invited the young men of Saskatoon to come serve their King. The exhibition was also home to an army training camp, with soldiers barracked in some of the buildings and drilling on the grounds. On August 4th, a rally was held at the Ex to mark the first anniversary of the war, including a military parade and an aerial ascent by aviator Billy Bunn. Even when you were having fun, it seemed, the war wasn't very far away.

Life at home: interior of the Sackville residence at 112 Avenue H North in 1915.



Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library - LH 5250

If you went to the Ex in 1915, there's a good chance you took the streetcar. The two-year-old Saskatoon Municipal Railway system was a critical part of the city's infrastructure in those days. Streetcar lines ran north through Caswell Hill to 33rd Street, up 7th Avenue north, west out on 20th as far as St. Paul's Hospital, south down Lorne Avenue to the Exhibition and even east on 8th Street out to the Town of Sutherland.

The most built-up neighbourhoods in 1915 were still Nutana, downtown, City Park and Caswell Hill. Construction of the university a few years before had spurred growth out along the north edge of what is now Varsity View, but population was pretty sparse there even so. Work on laying out the new parks in Caswell Hill and Buena Vista, begun in 1911, stopped. The elegant parks with their winding paths and fine trees would not be completed until after the war. Similarly, tree planting along the city's boulevards and the development of present-day Kinsmen Park would also have to await the return to peace.

Population-wise, Saskatoon was still very much a British town, with 83 per cent of its 21,000 citizens either British-born or of British ancestry. Other European countries supplied some 5.7 per cent of the population, while 7.8 per cent were Americans and .8 per cent were Asian.

Saskatoon was also a young city, with school-aged children making up almost 20 per cent of the population. There were 445 university students registered for the 1914–1915 year, the highest to date. People were also healthier in 1915 than they had been before, despite the economy. There were 934 births in Saskatoon that year, and while infant ➤

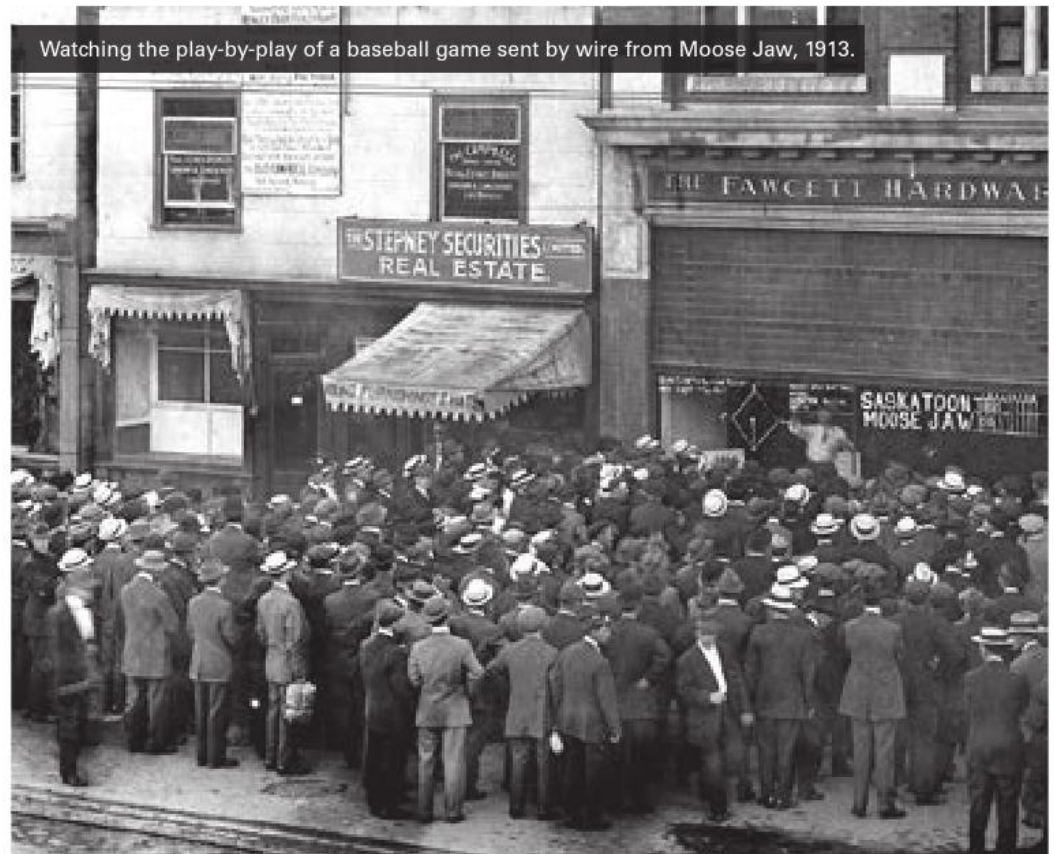


Photo: Local History Room – Saskatoon Public Library - PH 98-38-21



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Clipping: Saskatoon Phoenix, June 16, 1915

mortality was still high—79 children under the age of one died in 1915—this was half the number that died in 1913. The City Commissioner attributed it to improved inspection of the milk supply and a concerted effort to clean up “garbage and filth” in the city. By 1915, the yearly typhoid epidemic was finally a thing of the past here, thanks to improvements in the water supply. There were only eight cases that year, compared to 49 in 1913. At the same time, a public health campaign of rather a different sort culminated in 1915 with the closing of the bars in Saskatchewan.

As Saskatoon's men lined up to serve overseas—including a pair who rode their motorcycles to New York on their way to England to enlist—its women did their bit by donating their money and their time. They rolled bandages and knitted socks, held teas and pageants, adopted prisoners of war and, perhaps most impor-

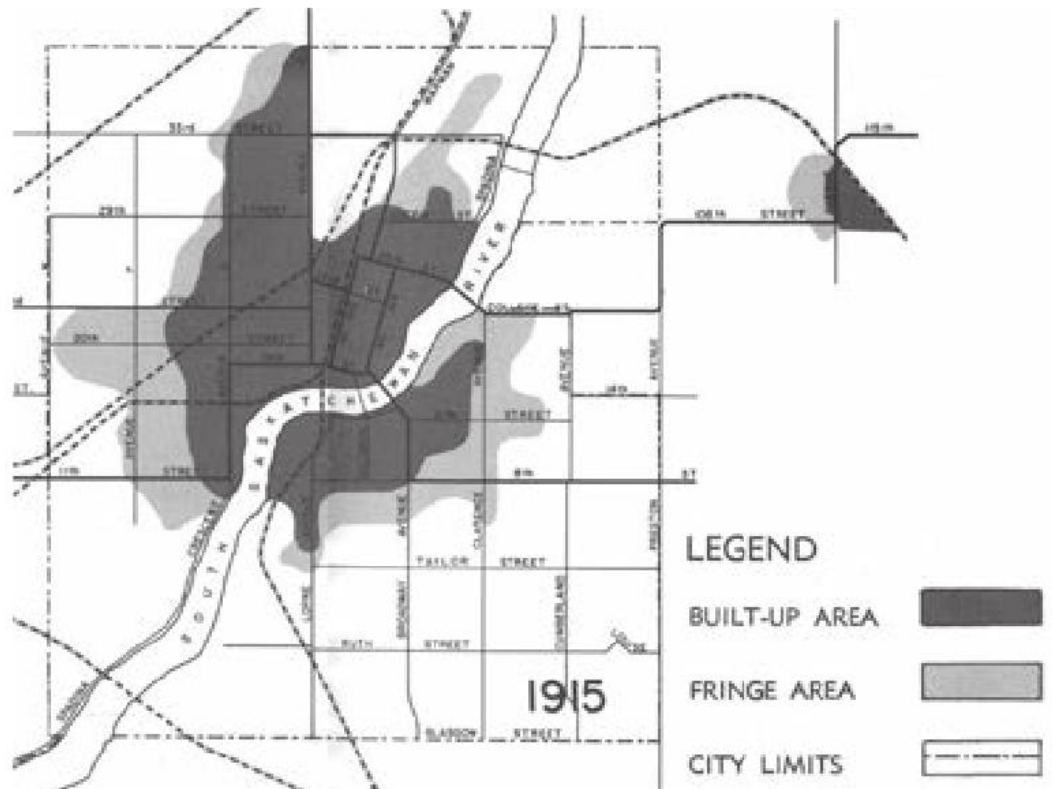


Photo: City of Saskatoon Archives

tantly, encouraged their men to enlist. Their reward for this, and for their unstinting support of the Ban the Bar campaign was to get the right to vote in 1916.

Despite its many worries, Saskatoon in 1915 was a busy, modern city. Granted, services were sparse on the fringes, where dirt streets, privies, the water delivery wagon and the summer water tap still ruled. But the city also boasted 45 miles of water mains, 42 miles of sewers, more than

50 miles of concrete sidewalks and almost six miles of paved streets.

For diversion we had moving picture theatres and pools halls, restaurants and concerts, a thriving public library and pretty much anything else you could want. On hot days, people flocked to the Municipal Bathing Pond, a boomed-off bend in the river where daredevil fun-seekers rode sleds down Saskatoon's first-ever water slide. There was baseball at Cairns Field up on Avenue A

near 26th Street and occasionally by telegraph posted in the window of Fawcett's hardware. They played soccer and cricket on the pitches in City Park and we had lawn bowling greens, golf courses and tennis courts. What's more, the harvest that year was shaping up to be a whopper and as the long days of summer gradually drifted into fall, it became evident that the recession, at least, was finally over. **H**

Jeff O'Brien

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RAMMED EARTH WALLS

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The picturesque streets of Taos, New Mexico are lined with the smooth facade of tan adobe buildings, the dramatic Taos Mountains looming in the distance. The town is one of Saskatoon homeowner Daren McLean's favourite places in the world, and he was trying to achieve a "Taos-like feel" in his backyard when he built his rammed earth walls.

"The rammed earth walls are used to separate sections

of our yard," explains McLean. "To one, we've added a L-shaped cedar seating with the wall as a backing. Another wall is designed to be the foundation of a pizza oven."

Rammed earth is a technique used to build walls out of soil. Unlike adobe, which is mud made into bricks that are then laid, rammed earth is directly made into walls using rectangular plywood forms that are filled with the mud and then

packed down.

The result looks similar to a cement wall, but tends to be of a warmer colour, and feature a series of linear marks. McLean also says his rammed earth walls are surprisingly soft to sit and lean against.

Green History Repeating

"It wasn't specifically rammed earth walls that I was interested in," said McLean. "What caught my attention was

the beauty of the technique and its historical use."

While rammed earth is not as popular on the prairies as it is elsewhere, Saskatchewan has seen its fair share of earth structures in its time, specifically sod houses. Sod bricks are cut from soil with a heavy mat of grass.

Earth structures are found all over the world, from the Great Wall of China (rammed earth) to the Great Mosque of ➤

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Djenné in Mali (adobe) to the thatched cob cottages of Devon, England to the Addison Sod House near Kindersley, Sask.

Whether they're rammed earth or adobe or sod bricks, earth structures are making a comeback in building design as an environmentally friendly option. Soil is widely available, and construction has a low environmental impact.

McLean first became aware of rammed earth walls in the early 2000s when he became interested in LEED and green building practices. A few years ago, he gave it a go with the help of his friend Lee Bolger, who had taken an instructional course on building rammed earth walls.

"So far they've stood up perfectly to the [prairie] weather. After four years there has been no noticeable change to the walls."

A Built-in Workout

Building a rammed earth structure isn't particularly expensive, but it can be time consuming, and it's a lot of physical work. To combat these challenges, McLean called in some help.


"We basically had a full-on community event," he said.

"There were a lot of friends who helped build it, which was really fun. You could do it by yourself; it's just a lot more difficult, and would take a lot of time."

The wall begins with a form placed in the desired location, similar to the type of form used for pouring concrete. The earth is mixed on site, immediately shoveled into the form before it has a chance to dry and harden and then rammed down. In commercial operations, the mixing and ramming will be done mechanically, but McLean says he "did things the hard way."

Looking Natural

McLean used Portland cement, pea gravel and water to create the mix, as well as coloured dye to help create striations within the wall, similar to what can be achieved using different types of dirt. Finding the right amount of dye to use took some experimentation, and they ended up having to use more dye than they expected, but the results are spot on.

"In my opinion, they are beautiful," he said. 

Ashleigh Mattern

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